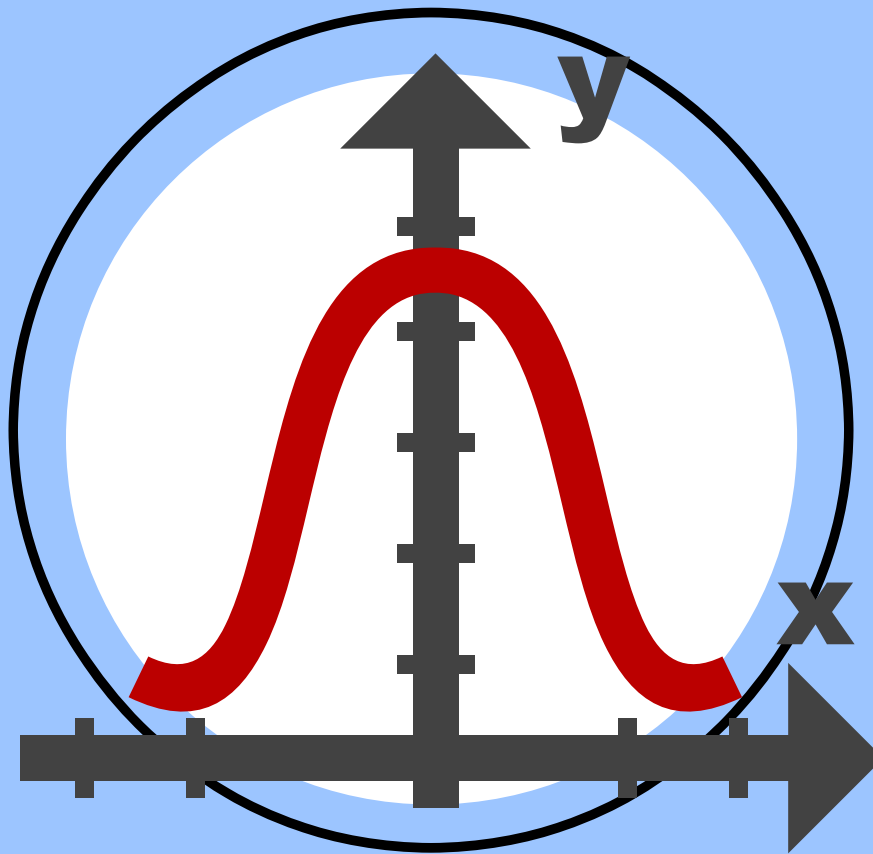


# Autism and IQ



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# *What is IQ?*

IQ is short for intelligence quotient. It's a score assigned based off standardized tests for intelligence. IQ scores align with a bell curve with about 85% of people having an IQ between 85 and 115.



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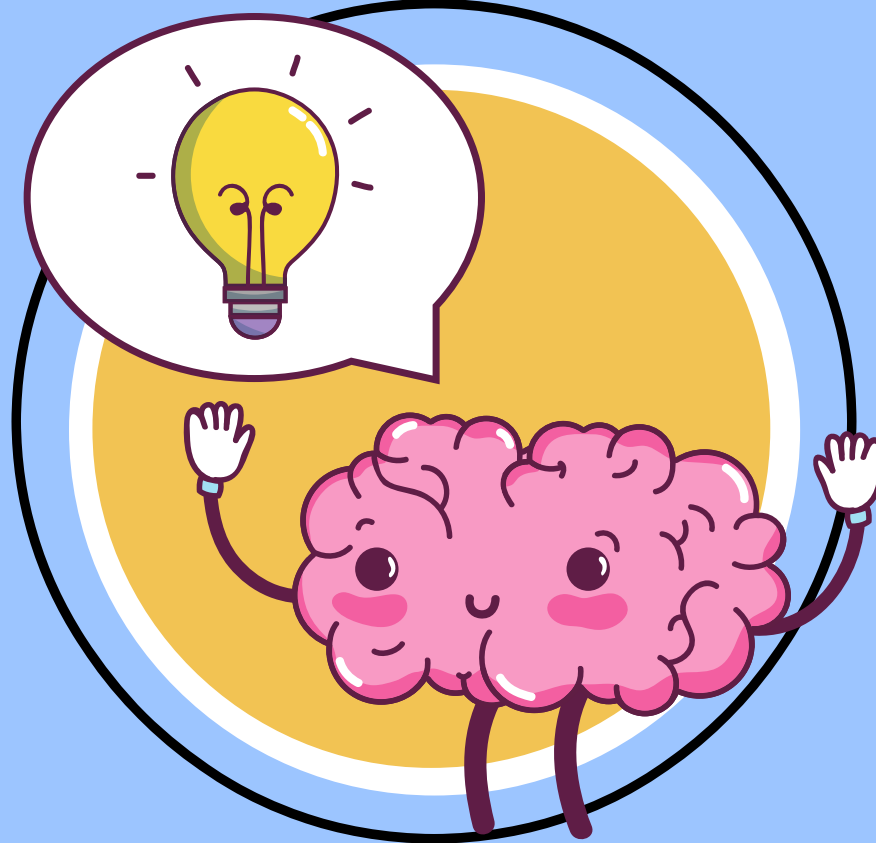


# ***IQ Test Biases***

The limitations and biases present in IQ and other tests of cognitive ability have been identified for decades, but that has not stopped their widespread use. Tests are largely designed for measuring white, neurotypical, middle class experiences.



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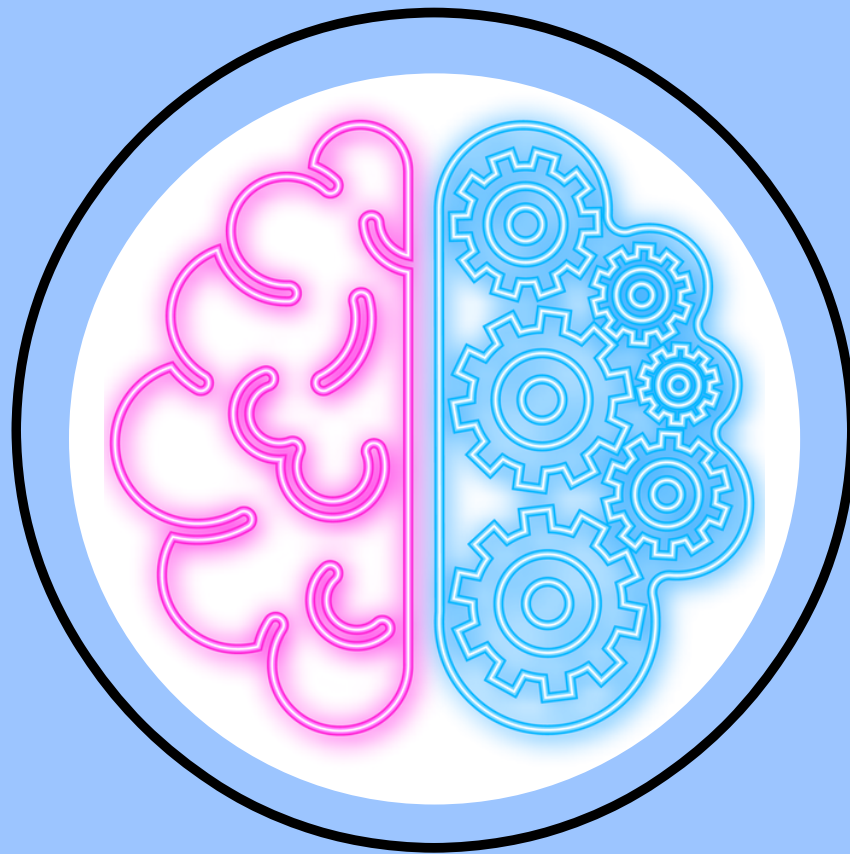


# *Autistic Brains*

Autistic brains are chemically and structurally different from non-autistic brains. They're wildly different from each other, too, with portions that are over-connected or under-connected. This means that standard measurements are inappropriate for non-standard minds.



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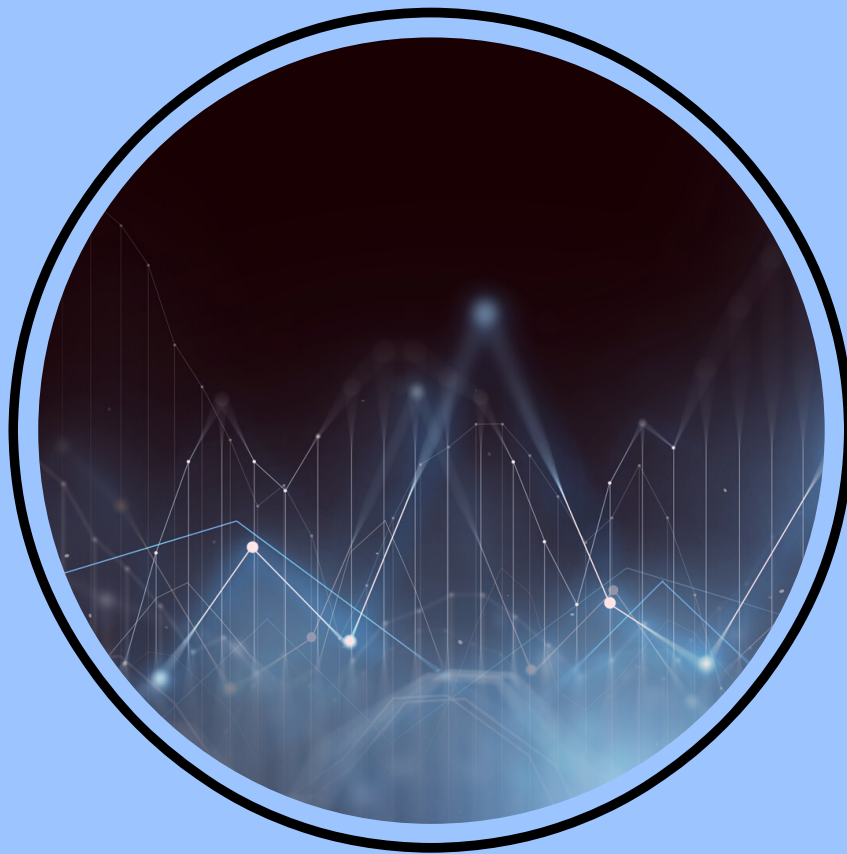


# ***IQ and Autistics***

While some autistic people may do extremely well on IQ tests, those same people may experience profound disability. Some autistic people may score poorly on IQ tests and still be wildly successful academically. Also, for autistic people, intelligence is not the same as support needs.



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# *Spiky Profiles*

Most autistic people have an “uneven” ability profile. While it’s normal for a non-autistic person to have areas of strength and weakness, these are not typically spanning more than 7 points on an IQ test. An autistic person can have more than a 50-point differential between scales.



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# *Non-Autistic Brains*



An average brain is like a student edition laptop. It can perform most everyday functions most people need to perform.

Some brains are like an executive computer, with more ram and memory and a better graphics card. They can run large programs like photo editing software.



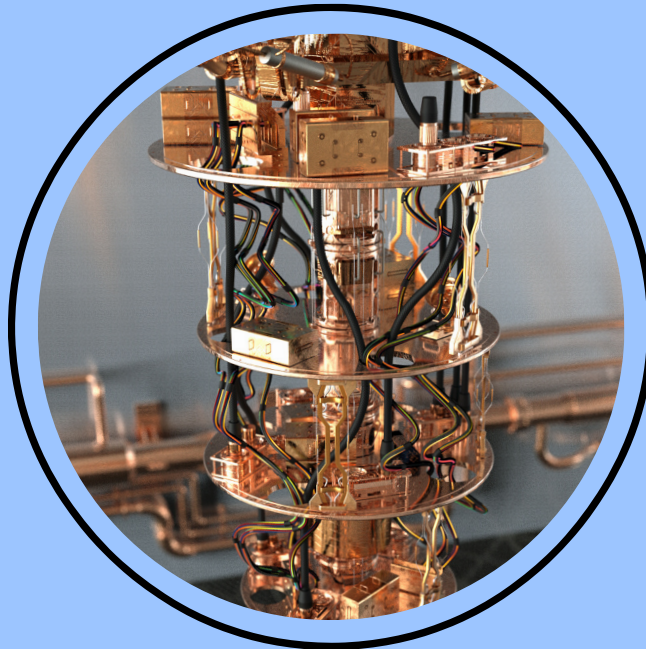
A few brains are like gaming computers, with high end hardware and the most advanced, modern technology.



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# *Autistic Brains*

An autistic person is like a custom-built computer. They might have the most advanced graphics card– a prototype not even available to the general population– but have a tiny hard drive. They might have a hard drive that is 20 times larger than the HP executive series, but a processor from a 2002 IBM.



The components of the autistic brain may not even be wired like the traditional computer at all, with multiple hard drives and processors that aren't connected to each other– so things stored in one drive may not be accessible for some programs. Information retrieval might have to take a really long and convoluted journey to be brought to the working memory.



# *Non-Autistic Brains*

Most people think of IQ as a measure of how smart, overall, a person is. This is because most people have a relatively even ability profile.

For most people, if they can do advanced math, they also have the skills to read a clock, button a shirt, tie a shoe, write with a pencil, or make a sandwich.

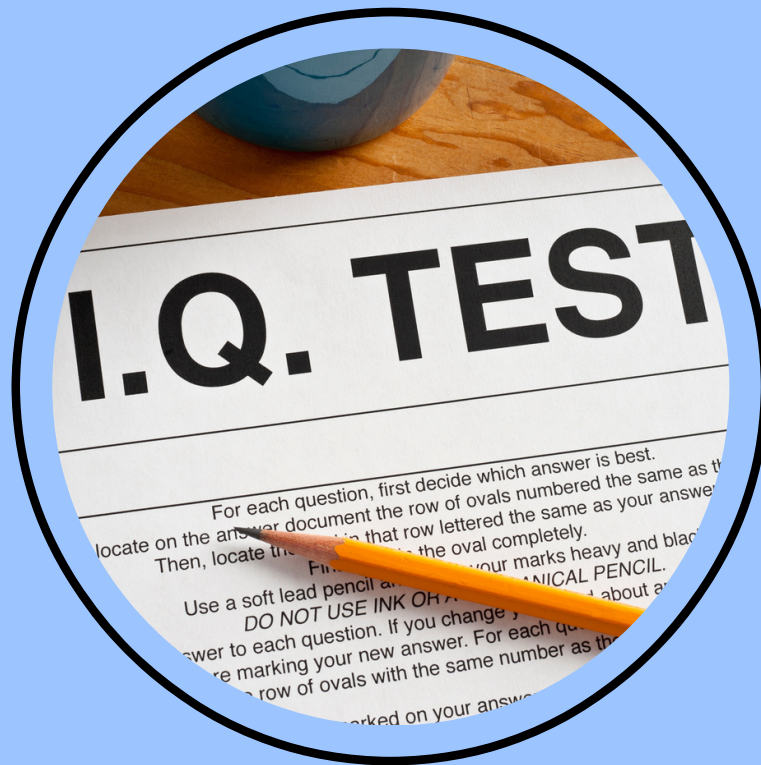


An autistic person is different. They may not be able to tie a shoe or cook a meal, but might be a great mathematician, artist, musician, or wordsmith.



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# *******IQ Tests Are Inadequate*******

Visual processing, auditory processing, and especially motor planning differences make IQ tests unreliable for measuring autistic potential. If a person cannot coordinate or control their movements reliably, even for speech, IQ tests aren't designed to identify what that person is capable of doing. Basically, IQ tests for many autistic people can only indicate what autistic people can't do in a standardized manner.

Professionals have a responsibility to always acknowledge limitations of tests, but that rarely happens, especially for nonspeaking autistics.

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